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MORAL FACTORS OF NATIONAL STRATEGY

A lecture delivered
at the Naval War College
on 3 June 1955 by
Dr. Charles W. Lowry

Admiral McCormick, Friends:

I am very much exhilarated by the opportunity of meeting with you at the Naval War College and speaking from my heart on the gripping theme which has been assigned me. Undoubtedly, no more interesting or momentous subject has ever been given me in any quarter. I believe that this reflects notable credit on the President and Faculty of this College.

I am very much tempted to take a moment to share with you an anecdote that I suppose is really my favorite. It is on the greatest personality, in some ways, of our time, Sir Winston Churchill, and goes back to a period when Churchill's estate in public esteem was very different from what it is now. A friend of mine told me that Churchill told him in the early thirties that he was finished. This is an anecdote that goes back to that period.

It seems that Bernard Shaw was a friend of Winston Churchill and that he sent him one day a little note with two tickets to the opening night of a new play. He said:

"Dear Winston,

Here are two tickets, one for you and one
for a friend — if you have a friend."

Well, I suppose that all of us realize that it is dangerous to quip with "the old master." He immediately wrote a letter back to Shaw, in which he said:

“Dear Bernard,

I am returning the tickets. Thank you very much for sending them. I had a previous engagement. I wish, however that you would send me two tickets for the second night of your play — if there is a second night.”

I am in the position of this being the “first night” as far as being before you gentlemen or at this College as a lecturer. On the other hand, I did have the very happy privilege of being here a year ago for your Global Strategy Discussions. So I do not exactly feel a stranger in coming here this morning.

Will you indulge me by allowing me a very short personal word as I break into this subject? As you all know, by profession I am a theologian and clergyman. For a quarter of a century, which is exactly the period since my ordination, I have nonetheless been profoundly and, I think, in a rather unusual way preoccupied with the crisis of the twentieth century at its most inward focal point — at the point which we may aptly describe as “the ideological storm center of the world hurricane.”

The moral and spiritual character of the crisis was first evident, for those with eyes to see, in the rise and spectacular impact of World Communism. The concurrent and infinitely more spectacular march to power of National Socialism in Germany sharpened the focus of perception into the inwardness and depth of modern man's predicament — again, for those with eyes to see.

It was in late 1932, about the time I “went down” after seven terms at the ancient University of Oxford, that a sensitive if erratic English intellectual, J. Middleton Murry, published a volume with the title modeled on a famous book by the youthful Shelley a century earlier. The title of the book was *The Necessity of Communism*. In that book J. Middleton Murry asserted roundly:

"Communism is the one living religion in the Western world today."

The emergence in Hitler and his Teutonic movement of a third installment in the totalitarian succession of Communism, Fascism, and National Socialism, was a verification not of the adequacy or accuracy of Murry's statement but of the clarity of his insight that behind the political, the social, the military happenings of our era there lay profound moral and religious disturbances.

About that same time, there was a Frenchman named Jacques Maritain, a famous lay Catholic philosopher, giving lectures in Spain, and he was characterizing Communism in a similar way.

Somewhat later two Englishmen, Arnold Toynbee, now world-famous, and the great wartime philosopher-Archbishop, William Temple, were speaking in about the same vein.

The germ of my own book, *Communism and Christ*, which is known to some of you and which was written in the summer of 1951, is to be found in a kindred insight; that is, in so far as the book has much value it is from this standpoint of a kindred insight, quickened and sharpened by many experiences in Germany, Italy, and England in the years 1930-1932. The immediate occurrences, however, that led to my attempting to write this book are so coincidental that I am tempted to share one or two of them with you.

In the fall of 1950 — and 1950 as a summer was quite a summer, you will remember, from several standpoints — I was called on to give an address at Princeton before an organization known as The Church Congress on the subject of *Christianity and Communism*. I was led, as a result of this particular conference, to try to sell the organization, The Church Congress (which was a voluntary church organization), on the idea of taking this sub-

ject to the American people — with high-level, thoughtful conferences — to try to develop the real seriousness of the problem. This led me to find that there was a sharp division in the American community, as we know that there came to be later on from another standpoint.

Also, at this period I kept on my bedside table for four months a copy of *The Communist Manifesto*, and brooded continually on the problem of a dynamic answer to the new secular gospel, to the new, extraordinary, "this worldly salvation system" that had, at the noonday of its scientific brilliance, turned our world upside down. Gentlemen, I think that it is this problem that hovers in the background as you and I are trying to think this morning on the *Moral Factors of National Strategy*.

May I throw in one word that is a word of caution? As I go on to emphasize and to attempt to put as sharp a focus as possible on the subject which you have given me — on this moral aspect of the total problem — let me make it absolutely clear that I have no conscious tendency to oversimplify the complex phenomenon of Communism, the globe which we presently inhabit, and our national defense posture, though I may be saying some things which because of the sharpness of the focus could lead you to feel that I am guilty of overemphasis. Please remember that I do realize the complexity of this whole situation; indeed, I recognize and try to preach constantly the importance of the economic, political, and military factors alongside and intertwined with what I like to call the "ideological aspect."

In particular, it seems to me that the average American needs a stronger realization than I think he often has of the indispensable role played by the American military establishment in the present "cold war" period. You and your brothers of the Armed Forces of this country are, in my judgement, the one absolute barrier in the way of Communism and its goal of world revolution and world subjugation. You are the defenders, whether

you always realize it or not, not merely of the United States of America but of Christian civilization and, indeed, of the whole tradition of high, humane civilization which is at stake. We who live and breathe normally in the civilian world sometimes take for granted this essential and inherently moral role of the Armed Forces in the defense of freedom and religion. We ought to cultivate more insight and have a broader vision in this matter. I think that we in the civilian world need to have a better understanding of your problems and needs.

But you who are of the Armed Forces, in turn, need to remember that your role in this age of storm and particular peril requires a sense of special vocation. To do your job well, you must have not only proper specialized vocational training, but you must have vision, moral insight and, perhaps most of all, a sense of dedication, for I think that is what we all need most. You must cultivate, as all thoughtful human beings must cultivate, a large perspective and an ability to lift your sights from time to time to those ultimate life-or-death issues that are in the background of our period of history.

I am afraid that you may feel that I have come up to the edge of what is a little sermonic, or up to the edge of preaching a little bit. If so, I do not apologize. After all, you invited me here knowing that I am by profession a preacher and a moralist. Any special value that my chosen avocation of ideologies, world politics, and the "cold war" in its intangible aspects may have stems from this basic personal reality.

But I do hope that everything which I shall now say will reflect the spirit of Baron von Hügel's advice to preachers when he said: "One ounce of 'is' is worth many pounds of 'ought.'" I guess that that is good advice for all of us.

Then there is the injunction of the friend of Charles Darwin and a nineteenth century scientist, Thomas H. Huxley, who, in a

simple maxim that has come to mean a very great deal to me, once said: "Sit down before the facts as a little child." I think that, again, speaks to all of us.

Finally, we can perhaps at least aspire, as we undertake to deal with the more intangible aspects of the world struggle of our epoch, to conform to the spirit and attempt of the great William James, who, as he was writing his book, *Principles of Psychology*, wrote his brother: "I have to forge every sentence in the teeth of stubborn and irreducible facts." That is a large order, and yet I am sure as I speak to men who are accustomed to deal with hard realities that you agree this is the spirit in which we have to try to operate.

Now I plunge in. As we reflect upon the twentieth century and its notable characteristics, two features appear to be dominating. The first is *accelerating technological power*, which is obvious I think. The second, which may not seem so obvious, is *waning moral power*. I am now talking about our age and its basic traits. The first great characteristic — namely, technology — is a subject on which you are certainly as well or better informed than I.

Let me note in passing, however, a coincidence that I think is calculated to give us pause. The United States is the foremost technological power in this world. The genius of our country has manifested itself conspicuously and uniquely in applied science, technical know-how, and industrial organization and productivity. This is something which we as a people take for granted; but it is this characteristic of America which inspires in Europe and Asia awe, fear, and, sometimes, hostility and hatred.

Marxism as a philosophy of life and society is a matter-centered, science-centered, and technique-centered philosophy. It is based on the intuition that technical man controls the future and the destiny of this planet. The strength of this instinct and the strength of this logic can be seen in the whole phenomenon of Soviet Russia, beginning with the October Revolution of 1917 and

coming down to the present moment. It can be studied in Marx, in Engels, in Lenin, in Stalin, and, I think very interestingly, in the decline of Malenkov and the rise of the Bulganin-Khrushchev clique in the Kremlin. I think that this situation is behind even the most recent events.

One reason for the growth of European "neutralism" is the fear that in the so-called "East-West struggle" there is a struggle between two contending materialisms. I think that it is difficult for us ordinary folks in America to realize this. As I say, we take so much for granted both our technological greatness and the moral resources and elements in our tradition. But I am quite convinced that this is a very important factor in the judgment in Europe about this conflict which disturbs many of us so much. The great religious cultures, likewise, of the Middle East, India, and Southeast Asia are even more likely to make the same judgment and then, quite illogically, to make haste in increasing the number of their own technicians.

For us who are deeply concerned about the United States, who love our country, who are deeply concerned about her safety as well as her worth and her greatness, this apparent meeting of extremes and this apparent materialistic intersection point is bound to be a subject of extreme gravity. Is this pure coincidence? Is this harmless parallelism? Is this simply historical accident? Or, is American culture in danger of being swamped by the very range and brilliance of its technological achievements? Is it in danger of losing its deeper soul? Are we as a people on top and in control of our particular brand of materialism or have we created a gigantic Frankenstein, which is without spirit and which could run away with us? I only put these as questions. For the moment, I leave them to percolate in the background of your minds.

The second dominating feature of this century, and perhaps the decades before this century, I have called "waning, declining moral power." I realize that is a provocative, and perhaps a star-

ting, assertion that some of you may be inclined to question. Most prophets of the nineteenth century — certainly the generality of the intellectuals and moralists of that century — assumed that the law of society was like the law of nature, and that the law of each one was progress — inevitable and necessary progress. These men believed that mankind was entering a great, new time of unification, peace, and fulfillment. The poet of this secular faith, which I think was also a religious faith to the people that held it and to some of us perhaps, was the poet laureate of England under Queen Victoria, Alfred Lord Tennyson. You will remember that as early as 1842 (and that is a good while back) this poet had sung:

“For I dipt into the future, as far as
human eye could see,
Saw the Vision of the world, and all
the wonder that would be;
Heard the heavens fill with shouting,
and there rain'd a ghastly dew
From the nation's airy navies grappling
in the central blue;”

But that was the prelude to something much finer:

“Till the war-drum throb'd no longer,
and the battle flags were furled
In the Parliament of man, the
Federation of the world.
Not in vain the distance beacons.
Forward, forward let us range,
Let the great world spin for ever down
the ringing grooves of change.
Thro' the shadow of the globe we sweep
Into the younger day;
Better fifty years of Europe than
a cycle of Cathay.”

But, today, Cathay (China) appears to want to return the compliment.

A more secular version of this faith was the view of one of Tennyson's contemporaries. I think this is a man of whom you may not know, for he does not have too much inherent importance any more — Henry Thomas Buckle — who wrote a three-volume work at the heyday of Victorian greatness entitled, *The History of Civilization*. He put forward a thesis that impressed his contemporaries and which is certainly a very strange one to us. He said that there were three discoveries that ensured the abolition of war: the first discovery was gunpowder; the second was political economy, by which he meant *laissez-faire* economics; the third was swift steam transport. These ensured not only world unification but the abolition of war.

At the very end of the century there was Nobel of Sweden, founder of the great peace prize and discoverer of dynamite. For him, there was no contradiction here. He thought that dynamite would make war so deadly that it would be eliminated.

How different is the reality of the new century, our own twentieth century! It has proven so far to be an age not of unification, but of division; not of fulfillment, but of destruction; not of peace, but of two world wars and global "cold war"; not of moral and human consummation, but of spiritual disintegration and monstrous immorality.

From the political standpoint, kings and dynasties have gone down like stars raining from heaven; ancient empires have been dissolved; strong, vital nations have made a bid for a place in the sun, for living space, for continental supremacy, even for world conquest — and have been struck down. To be specific, the last remnant of the Holy Roman Empire of a thousand years, Austria-Hungary, was dismantled in 1919; Germany was temporarily arrested in her bid for power, but was destined to rise

again in a titanic thrust to seize, first, the eastern marches, then, the world island, Afro-Eurasia; then, the world.

Somewhere around 1936, the British Ambassador to Germany, Sir Neville Henderson, was having a conversation with Hermann Göring, the Number Two Nazi. The latter posed the question: "Who profited most as a result of the settlement of World War I?" Henderson (this is from memory, but I believe it is correct), after some thought replied: "Probably Yugoslavia."

"No," said Göring, "Germany came out best. Still ahead of her was the achievement of her national unity."

In the end, however, Germany — the ablest European nation and, I believe, one of the most gifted peoples of all time — went down to destruction in a fearful *Götterdämmerung* (Twilight of the Gods).

In the same Second World War, Great Britain ceased to be a major power and, despite Sir Winston Churchill, persisted with the project of liquidating an empire.

The fate of Japan, ambitious to be an Asiatic Britain, was more disastrous but essentially similar.

France and Italy, likewise, joined or relapsed into the company of second-to-third-class powers.

It was the Soviet Union that emerged as the real victor in World War II. Why? Because she had never ceased to combine political warfare with military or armed conflict.

The United States emerged as the number one industrial and technological power, but she neither gained nor lost with regard to territory or to manpower.

By extreme naivete' with respect to the character of the Soviet ally, and, in my judgment, with respect to the true re-

lation between war and politics, she forfeited many advantages in the "cold war", already setting in, that should have been hers.

The first major alteration in the balance of power which existed at the end of the Second World War came with the Communist conquest of China. There are so many parallels which one is tempted to draw between China in 1949-1950 and Russia in 1917-1918. But there is one immense difference and one great advantage that the Asiatic nation had: it had the blueprint of the Soviet experience and it had a mighty, new, industrial giant to give it support where it needed it most. Of course it was this support that enabled China to wage the Korean War.

Now I want to give you a prophecy, written by Henry Adams in the year 1903. This passage is worth placing beside the well-known description of the two coming giants, Russia and the United States, by de Tocqueville. I am sure that you all know the de Tocqueville passage, but you may not know this Adams sequel:

"My statesmanship is still all in China, where the last struggle for power is to come. China is bound to go to pieces, and every year is a long step to the bad. The only country now on the spot is Russia; and if Russia organizes China as an economical power, the little drama of history will end in the overthrow of our clumsy Western civilization. We never can compete with Asia. In that event, I allow until 1950 to run our race out."

That is a rather arresting statement and the chronology is sufficiently close to give us a little disturbance.

Now I want to say that it seems to me that there is a great new element (that is why I have given this background) in our world situation which neither Adams nor de Tocqueville, nor the generality of thinkers of this period or later, took clearly

into account. We call this the "ideological element." Behind it is the rise of a new and potent, "this worldly faith," the faith of Communism.

History, as I believe, is the interaction of two principal factors. I think it may be valuable for me to just list these: the *power factor* and the *idea factor*. It seems to me that in these remarkable quotations and prophecies of de Tocqueville (which I assume you know) and of Adams, it is quite striking that little attention was given to the possibility that there could emerge a new revolutionary idea that would have tremendous import from the standpoint of getting intertwined with the power factors, which are familiar to you and which we commonly think of as the stuff of history.

I think that the great new element which has come into play in our world, which these men ignored is the rise of a new dynamic "idea" factor. I remark that it is certainly very striking that the primary emphasis of Friedrich Hegel, from whom Karl Marx appropriated the notion of "dialectic", was on not power immediately — though, indirectly, it was there — but on the idea. History, Hegel believed, was essentially the drama of the conflict and the advance of the idea. He said that it was the nature of the idea to clothe itself in the form of power; from another standpoint, to clothe itself in the artistic creations of mankind; and and from still another standpoint, to clothe itself in what Hegel would call "the poetry or the myths of religion."

Most of us would agree, today, that Hegel put too much weight on the idea. Also, I think that he was too completely obsessed with the concept of an ultimate and artificial unity in history and in reality. It is possible to argue, as indeed certain Germans have been known to do, that "might is final", and that "guns or atom bombs are more powerful than ideas or morals". Yet, surely the facts point to a more complex and a more intermediate view than either of these two extremes. Physics is a reality; so is

mechanics; so is geography and climate; so is human contrivance, ingenuity, and technical development. But it is equally obvious and equally unchallengeable that man is more than a machine; man is more than all materiality; man is more than blood and soil, as the Naxis taught. Man is a thinker, an imaginer, a dreamer, a believer, and a lover. Man is a being for whom time exists. Therefore, because time exists — past, present and future — because man transcends by his very nature any given moment or experience, man lives by values and loyalties that transcend the immediate and the instinctual.

“We look before and after,
And pine for what is not;
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those
that tell of saddest thought.”

Now let us step up the tempo of our argument and try to bring into sharp focus two momentous realities. *First*, there is the essentially moral nature of man; *second*, there is the moral aspect of the “cold war” struggle in its present phase. To move rapidly, I think there are really only three views of man.

The first view is that man is a thing, a material reality; that whatever there is in him of mind or spirit is a kind of manifestation, inexplicable, of basic atomic, material reality. Man, on this view, which is the doctrine of Communism, is as sheerly material as an electric dynamo or a flowing river or a stone quarried from a granite mountain.

The second view is the view that man is essentially an animal — a very clever and very ingenious animal, but still no more than an animal. I think this was the view of the Germans under Hitler. I wish I had time to tell you of an experience I had in 1939, while talking with some graduates of the *Ordensburger*, or

leadership academies, where we got into this whole issue of man. I haven't time to talk about it, but what they felt was that man is a being of nature; and that God is the principle of nature, but not a Being beyond — a kind of pantheistic point of view.

The third view is that man is precisely man; he can not be reduced to that which is lower; he is a being qualitatively above the animal or the thing and characterized by spiritual form or aspect.

Democracy, as a form of society, is based on this third doctrine. This is also the doctrine of Christianity and Judaism; this is the doctrine, in addition, of all the great world religions. They differ in many important respects, but they are very close together from the standpoint of believing that man is in the essential aspect of his nature a moral and spiritual being. I think that the heart of the contemporary crisis is to be located precisely at this point. It is a crisis in man's conception of himself and in the morals appropriate to what man is in his essential nature. Behind the present distemper of society, and the apocalyptic roar of conflict on a global scale for the highest stakes in history, there lies a hundred years and more of spiritual erosion, an increasing moral doubt as man felt less and less sure of himself as a personal being and more and more confident that the things that are seen and manageable by science are final and decisive. If this point gets over clearly, then it is the most important thing I can say, because Marxism, and Communism following it, represents the application socially, or the application in terms of a mighty world plan, of this confidence coming out of science in the nineteenth century, that "here is the final thing." We are not going to meet the whole issue at the proper level until we really grapple intellectually, spiritually, and morally with this problem. That is what I mean by the waning moral power of the modern era.

Now, the second focus: the moral problem in the "cold war" and as a consideration of our national strategy. If we look

at the impact of the idea factor, and I believe that in some ways it is the first thing to be taken into account, we realize that it is not just simply one idea among many but that the key thing is a full-blown ideology that mysteriously and strangely arose and has come to have this world impact. We call this "Communism". It is at once a world view, a theory of history, a vulgar application of science to society and politics, a revolutionary manifesto, and a kind of secular gospel or announcement of a good time coming for all men from the material and social standpoint.

Any idea that is believed fervently, or any strong loyalty releases moral energy. Here, perhaps, we can explain something that is confusing. Such energy has a "plus" that is over and above animal vitality or mechanical power. No group of men have understood this better than the great military captains of history. Napoleon simply put it with Gallic intensity when he said that "in war the moral is to the material as three is to one."

Moral energy has a negative side as well as a positive side. I can explain that by calling your attention to what the psychologists and psychiatrists say about the nature of love. The moral may turn into the immoral, just as love may turn into hate, and still there is what I am calling "the energy quotient," the ability to generate force. From a short-term standpoint, hate may seem more powerful than love. The sentiment of absolute anti-religion and immorality in an absolute sense may seem to release more energy than religion and morality — especially, if there is a reaction against an anemic, pale, and bloodless religion or morality, which I am afraid was the feeling of many people in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. That helps us to explain and understand the paradox that, with due respect, I do not think is always clear to military, technical, and operational people: the paradox of the dynamic, on the one hand, and yet the immoralism of Communism.

"The cold war" is the phrase which we have come to use for a twilight situation, in which, in a condition of theoretical peace,

Communism carries on by all possible means, short of all-out armed conflict, political war. This is a subject that could take a long time, but I want to focus on this point: I think that, today, we are in a new phase. I recently read General Sarnoff's memorandum (I am sure many of you have seen that). Yet, I think there is not enough in this which emphasizes what I think is a new phase of the "cold war". This phase is characterized by the so-called "atomic stalemate". Whatever military men may think of the theoretical validity of such a concept it is a reality in the popular mind, including scientists and intellectuals very widely, and I am impressed by the extent of this. Am I not right that it has already had an overwhelming impact upon our foreign policy?

At first, the public reaction, in tune with Soviet propaganda, attached itself to the theme of "coexistence". Now, a new and more powerful theme has come into play, the theme of "peace". Daily, we see the hopes of peoples rising and feeding on the most insubstantial shadows. I seem to detect in the reactions of many who should be among the most thoughtful Americans something that amounts to a kind of suppressed mutual congratulation that was has now fortunately been eliminated and rendered obsolete by the very destructiveness of the weapons which both sides possess.

In my conviction, this means that we have in fact now reached the most dangerous moment our nation and the world have known since perhaps the late spring of 1941, when it looked as if the madman (who was not so mad), Adolf Hitler, had Europe, Africa, and Britain in the hollow of his hand and it only remained to pick off the yet unoccupied pieces, one by one. Perhaps the present junction of events is much more dangerous than that, for all Asia is involved. Communist China is a reality and the adversary, Communist Totalitarianism, is far more seasoned, effective, impressive, and, from a strange standpoint, maturely logical than any tyranny so far known in history.

What is the character of this present moment? Let me try to give it to you as I see it for discussion as tersely and crisply as possible:

1. The atomic stalemate is a reality which is likely to obtain for a number of years. America has rejected the concept of "preventive war" and, in this matter, complete initiative has passed into the hands of the enemy. It is, however, inconceivable that the latter will be in any great hurry to exercise such initiative.
2. The rejoicing of many publicists, divines, and scientists, because of the belief that war is now obsolete, is premature (perhaps that is the understatement of the year). If we ask who stands to benefit most from the elimination of war as an instrument of national policy (I have in my hands a clipping of a recent statement by Chancellor Adenauer of Germany, which I got hold of after I put that phrase down, which reads: "The call for peace is growing even stronger in the world. In this age of development, war has defeated its own purpose; it has ceased to be an instrument of policy.") I think that congratulation is certainly premature. As I see it at the present moment, Communism stands to benefit most from the situation that is leading to this kind of statement. The atomic stalemate, indeed, presents on a silver platter a situation in which the men of the Kremlin and their confederates are freed to prosecute systematically, deliberately, without any hurry and exercising the patience that they have developed, their plan of world subversion, revolution, and monolithic integration.

3. There is one way out of this dilemma, and this way is the best hope of altering radically, and for good, the present historical situation: We must at long last accept the challenge of Communism, not only at the *hardware* level, but at the *moral* and *ideological level*. We must come to grips with the problem, which I am sure is a very difficult problem, of seizing the initiative and defeating the enemy at this level.
4. The war which we are in, misleadingly and unwittingly called the "cold war", is a new kind of war — not absolutely new, but I think in its totality a new kind of war. It has its own principles and laws, which must be studied and mastered. This war which we are in can be won only if we have the wit, judgment, patience, and imagination to evolve and carry through a grand strategy, a strategy that is superior to that of the enemy because it is bolder, more comprehensive, and more realistic.
5. My reference, of course, is to an "ideological strategy" I do not refer to guns or to logistics in the material sense. Perhaps we shall yet get down to a serious preoccupation with "spiritual logistics." Such a strategy must be spelled out in terms of broad strategic objectives. These objectives must be related to conditions and resources in various parts of the globe, beginning with the home front. This is very important from the standpoint of the totality of our defensive posture. Then, programs must be devised and set in motion with a view to realizing these strategic objectives. Some of these programs our Government can carry out; but I think that many of them must be

the work of private organizations, widely supported by the public — both in the United States and in other sectors of the Free World.

6. The moral factors are the decisive ones in the present phase of the world struggle. I do not mean that the other factors are unimportant (I have already expressed myself on that), but the moral factors represent the one area in which we have freedom of initiative, in which we have genuine freedom of action. I think that this must be reflected in our national strategy and its energetic and imaginative implementation.

The first line of attack (I am giving you now my own particular special analysis, not to eliminate other lines which you know more about than I, even from the standpoint of political warfare, but because I think that I am giving you something that has been neglected) should be at the religious level. All of the great religions of the world have a common stake in the battle against an enemy dedicated to atheistic materialism and godless inhuman tyranny.

The second line of attack should be at the ethical and human level. In person-to-person contacts, in radio broadcasts, in films, in printed matter, in what not, there should be appeal — constantly, sincerely, and well thought out — to human dignity, to conscience, to the Golden Rule, to what we as common beings have in common.

Then I, personally, think there is a third line of attack that has not been too well developed. It should be to elaborate and popularize a positive alternative to Communism. One of the great weaknesses is that we always appear negative. There must be a positive alternative worked out, an ideology for modern man that we might call "Democracy for the Twentieth Century." The

beliefs and concepts of such a positive democratic manifesto are the stock of the American tradition and I am convinced that they are deep in the instincts of the American people. If they could be recrystallized and related to the specific problems and the psychology of the multitudes in this post-colonial world, they would be invincible.

Such, in bare outline and in harsh summary, is the role of "the moral", as I see it.

In conclusion, and following the suggestion of your President, I want to venture to give you — not dogmatically but, I hope, thoughtfully — a note on morality and nuclear weapons. I mean this to be suggestive and not entirely comprehensive.

I, personally, belong to the school of ethics which repudiates pacifism and has an enormous respect for the role played by force throughout history. I think you may be surprised when I say that I think the dean of this particular school of ethics in our history was Saint Augustine, a remarkable realist as well as a great personality and theologian, who I used to tell my classes in theology was such a colossus that he at once became the father of the mediaeval synthesis and the inspirer of the Protestant reformation — not a mean combination. Saint Augustine once said (I think you gentlemen ought to remember this sentence): "The peace of the world is always based on force." That is one side. But, at the same time, force, and its extension in war, has its limitation. Unless limited and kept in check by reason and moral principle, it usurps its normal and necessary function, as I think it has in our time, and threatens the very fabric of civilization.

Accordingly, the two concepts, coming down to us from the mediaeval period of the Christian soldier and the just war, seem to me to be valid as ideals. Their spiritual continuation in the modern effort to set up definite norms and laws of civilized warfare, which have been badly frustrated, should not be regarded

cynically as *right's labor lost*. On the contrary, these ideals are quick and living as influences upon free, responsible, and Godly men, who face the grim realities of total war and who glimpse on the further side of gigantic mushroom clouds the possible dissolution of human civilization and even the destruction of every living thing.

As we visualize the enormous problems of our time, an era truly on which the ends of the world have come, there are no clear and definite ground rules available. A codified set of rules and laws is out of the question. There is something, however, that every true man can have: that is a spirit of sensitivity and of responsibility. Such a spirit must be more than a momentary sentiment or a fluctuating emotion, that, like a candle, flickers in the wind and can easily be snuffed out. It must be a stable attribute of will, grounded in a clear sense of right and wrong, responsibility and irresponsibility, love of life and mysterious urge to death that can grip men, both individually and collectively.

To such subjective moral preparation for war in a nuclear age, which must not be left to chance but should be a major educational objective in all of our Service Academies and War Colleges, we may add as an objective guide line the principle of "the lesser evil". This is as definite and as indispensable a principle in ethics as that of "the greater good", or "the greatest good". I think that this principle of "the lesser evil" offers us some guidance and help as we try to face, honestly and in good conscience, the infinitely grave issues of the employment of nuclear weapons.

Now, I am going to take an extreme illustration to try to focus this, one which I shall not mind if you regard as a little ridiculous. It is an extreme and somewhat artificial illustration, but it will perhaps focus the kind of problem we have to face.

Let us suppose that we fail to do what I have advocated — to stop the continuing ideological and political offensive of World

Communism. Asia, let us say, succumbs. I know people who prophesy (I hope it is not true and I do not believe that it is) such an outcome. Let us suppose that Germany has been neutralized by this new tactic that began with the neutralization of Austria and then in effect all of Europe. Africa can then be brought into the Soviet camp almost at will. Then let us add that in Latin America there are generally well-disciplined, progressive parties that can be activated on fairly short notice.

On the other side, let us suppose that the United States, luckily, has managed to maintain its technological superiority and is known to be far in the lead in the field of intercontinental ballistic missiles. This has kept the lords of the Kremlin from risking an all-out preventive war, but it is obvious that the risk to them of waiting is increasing with every day. What should we do? I think that the answer is evident, but let me try to state it. An evil incomprehensible in terror and magnitude — for, of course, retaliation upon us would be swift and as total as possible — must be embraced for, otherwise, we embrace a greater evil; we accept supinely the far greater evil of a monolithic, technically-administered, universal slave empire.

That case, which of course is purely invented, is a comparatively simple one. What you gentlemen will actually face in our lifetime is likely to be far more complex and difficult from the standpoint of decisions. Yet, the principles of moral sensitivity and the lesser evil are guide lines which I think are valid, both for thoughtful preparation now and for courageous decision in the day of large and pressing emergency.

In lieu of any attempt at a formal summary, I am moved — I hope not recklessly — to share with you a severe criticism of American performance so far in this century in what we may call — at least, partially — the field of moral judgment. I do this with the constructive design of stabbing us awake and seeking to immunize us against what I think is the peril when we talk

about "morals" and "morality"; namely, the complacency of every moral standpoint purchased at too cheap a cost. The following is a quotation. I do not agree with everything in it, but I agree with it in the main:

"Europe is the victim of the West's pursuit of political absolutes and the United States, throughout the history of its European interventions, has raised the delusion of extreme solutions to the rank of a tutelary myth, presiding over the fortunes of Europe. Absolutes call for absolute reactions. Hitler was the creature of the extreme nationalism that was the true victor in World War I. It is the tragedy of World War II that the one power, the United States, that had suffered the least in the fighting and was the least susceptible to ideological infections and could therefore have remained emotionally most detached, not only failed to cast its weight upon the side of moderation but proclaimed absolutes that, in their extremity, surpassed World War I dogmas of national self-determination and universal democracy. The extreme solutions issuing from World War I, and henceforth contradicting each other with ever-increasing dogmatic vehemence, are the projections of social alienation into world politics. There is no longer a middle ground. The choice is between brutish, bloodstained Germans and fair champions of democracy; between Stalin, the benevolent of Teheran and Yalta, and Stalin, the Kremlin despot; between cooperation with the Soviet Union and the dismemberment of the Soviet Union according to, of all things, the principle of national self-determination; between Morgenthau's ruralized Germany and the State Department's resurgent Germany — military and industrial despot of Europe. That these antiethical notions are shuffled at will and upon short notice,

and with the enthusiastic approval of experts and public opinion, does not bespeak collective mental equilibrium."✓

Admitting the substantial accuracy of his indictment — not all details, but substantially — two reactions are possible. One is to repudiate absolutes entirely as far as human affairs are concerned; to regard and hold as permanently valid the cynical standpoint of *Realpolitik* — namely, that politics and morals are like oil and water, they simply do not mix; that politics is reality, and in essentials never changes (I know professors of political science who are saying that at this moment); that morals is the private affair, on the other hand, of every individual. That is a possible reaction, and, I think, a dangerous one.

The other reaction, which I believe is the genuinely American reaction, is to recognize candidly the combination of immaturity and hypocrisy which vitiated American moralism as a factor in international affairs from 1917 to 1947 and which still exists, no doubt, as a virus in the national blood stream. At the same time, it is unnecessary and cowardly to haul down the flag of "idealism". Without idealism, there will never be a better world; and I think that without it democracy, as a form of social order, is finished.

The true position for a nation, as for an individual, is to stand upon firm moral foundations and yet to realize and to be educated carefully in the knowledge that there is such a thing as the inexpedient and there is such a thing as the impossible. Needless to say, I believe that it is the genius and destiny of the United States to take the second course and to live in the American century by *the dialectic of idealism and realism*.

I thank you!

✓ Dr. Robert Strausz-Hupe', *The Zone of Indifference*, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1952.

BIOGRAPHIC SKETCH

Dr. Charles Wesley Lowry

Dr Lowry was born in Indian Territory in 1905. He received his B. A. degree from Washington and Lee University (1926), M. A. degree from Harvard (1927), B. D. degree from Episcopal Theological School (1930) and Ph. D. from Oxford University (1933).

He was ordained a deacon in 1930 and the following year he was ordained a priest. From 1930-1932, Doctor Lowry was a traveling fellow, Episcopal Theological School, after which he became Episcopal Chaplain at the University of California. From 1934 to 1943, he was a professor of Systematic Theology at Virginia Theological Seminary.

Since 1943, he has been rector of All Saints' Church, Chevy Chase, Maryland. Since 1945, Doctor Lowry has been chairman of the Board of Examining Chaplains, Diocese of Washington, as well as the secretary of the Standing Committee. At present, Doctor Lowry is chairman and executive director of the Foundation for Religious Action in the Social and Civil Order.